

175

Years

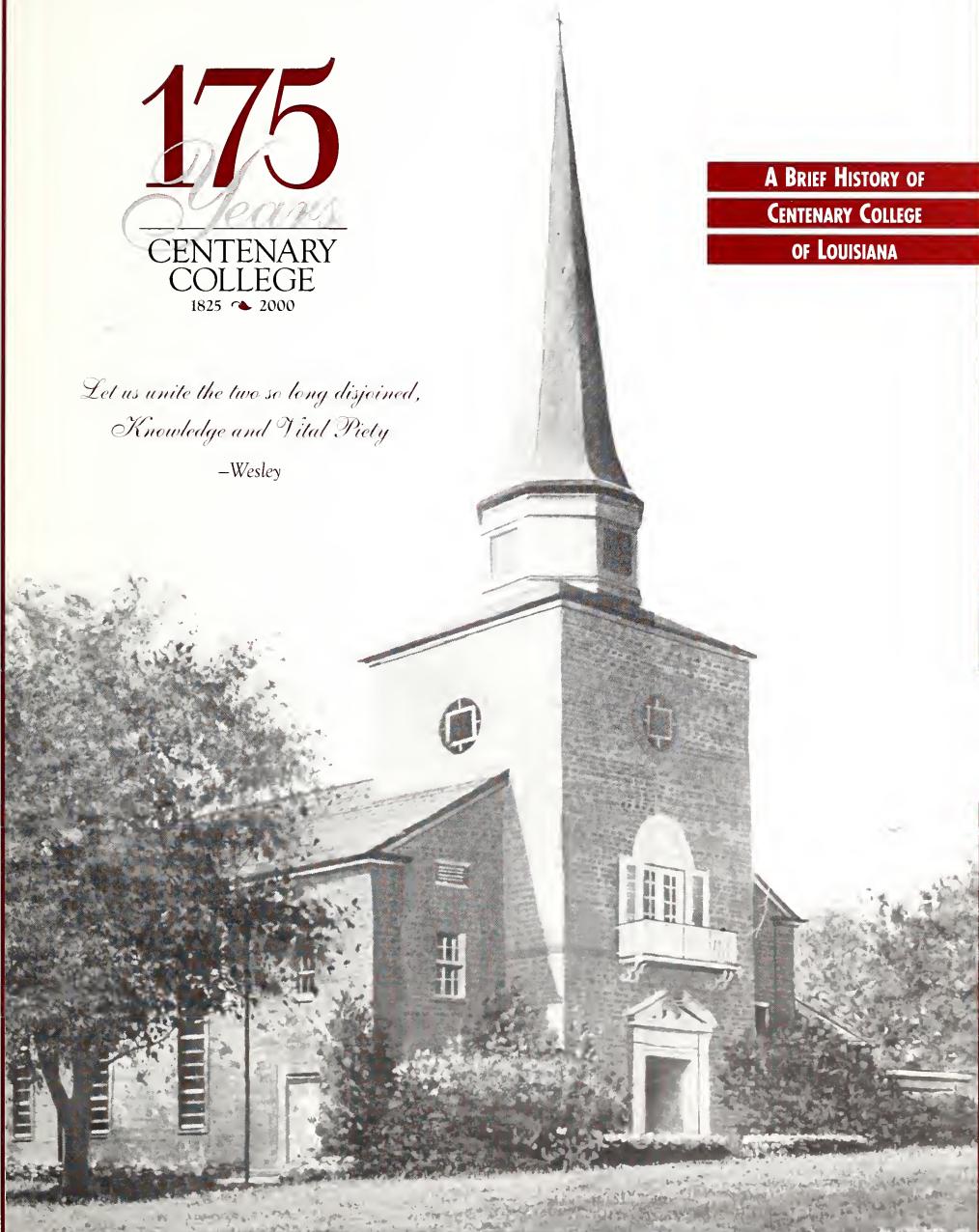
CENTENARY
COLLEGE

1825 ~ 2000

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
CENTENARY COLLEGE
OF LOUISIANA

*Let us unite the two so long disjoined,
Knowledge and Vital Piety*

—Wesley



PRESIDENTS

COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

JACKSON, LOUISIANA — 1825-1845

1. Reverend Jeremiah Chamberlain	1826-1828
2. Lieutenant H.H. Gird	1829-1834
3. Reverend James Shannon	1834-1840
4. Reverend William D. Lacey	1840-1843

CENTENARY COLLEGE

CLINTON, MISSISSIPPI — 1841

BRANDON SPRINGS, MISSISSIPPI — 1841-1845

5. T. C. Thornton	1841-1844
6. William Winans (<i>Pro-tem</i>)	1844-1845

CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

JACKSON, LOUISIANA — 1846-1907

7. Judge D. O. Shattuck	1846-1848
8. Judge A. B. Longstreet	1848-1849
9. Reverend H. H. Rivers	1849-1854
10. Dr. Henry C. Thweatt	1854
11. Dr. John C. Miller	1855-1865
12. W. H. Watkins	1866-1870
13. Dr. Charles G. Andrews	1870-1882
14. Dr. D. M. Rush	1883-1885
15. Dr. T. A. S. Adams	1885-1887
16. Dr. George H. Wiley (<i>Pro-tem</i>)	1887-1888
17. Reverend W. L. C. Hunnicutt	1888-1894
18. Dr. C. W. Carter	1874-1898
19. Dr. I. W. Cooper	1898-1902
20. Dr. Henry Beach Carré	1902-1903
21. Reverend C. C. Miller	1903-1906

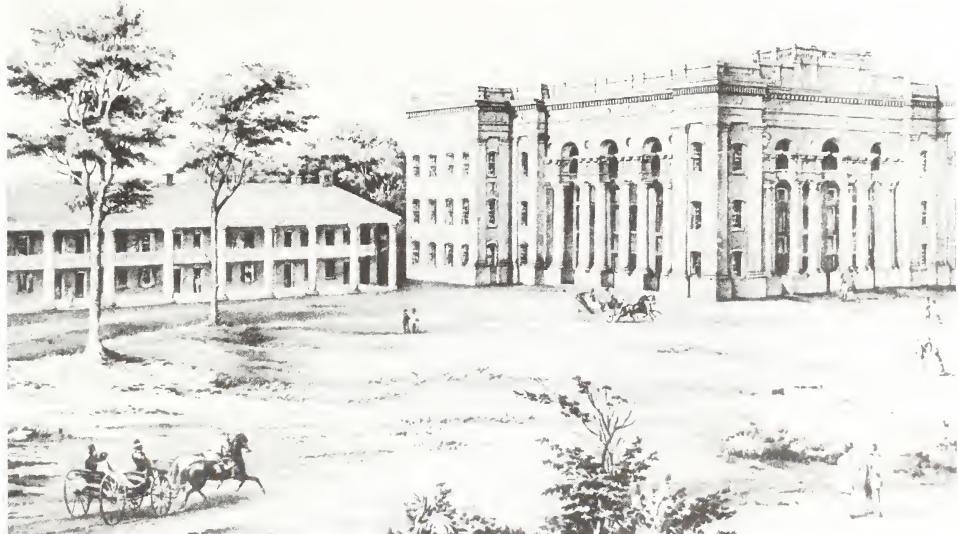
CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA — 1908-

22. William Lander Weber	1908-1910
23. Dr. Felix R. Hill	1910-1913
24. Dr. Robert H. Wynn	1913-1918
25. R. W. Bourne	1919-1920
26. Dr. R. E. Smith (<i>Pro-tem</i>)	1920-1921
27. Dr. George S. Sexton	1921-1932
28. Dr. W. Angie Smith (<i>Pro-tem</i>)	1932-1933
29. Dr. Pierce Cline	1933-1943
30. Dr. Joe J. Mickle	1945-1964
31. Dr. Jack S. Wilkes	1964-1969
32. Dr. John H. Allen	1969-1976
33. Dr. Donald A. Webb	1977-1991
34. Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab	1991-

The original brochure containing a brief pictorial history of Centenary College of Louisiana was prepared by Dr. Walter Lowrey of the Department of History for the sesquicentennial celebration of Centenary College in 1975. The present brochure, prepared by Dr. Bentley Sloane, Trustee Historian, for Centenary's 175th anniversary in the year 2000, is based on the work of Dr. Lowrey.

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



The above picture of the campus of Centenary College of Louisiana in Jackson features the great Center Building that was erected in 1857 after the Methodists of the Mississippi-Louisiana Conference purchased the property of the College of Louisiana in 1845.

Centenary College of Louisiana is the product of the confluence of two streams of history at Jackson, Louisiana in 1845, one state and the other church. Soon after the purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France by the United States in 1803, the southern portion was declared to be the "Territory of Orleans" with New Orleans the capital and principal city. In 1804, President Jefferson named William C.C. Claiborne as Governor of the Orleans Territory, which included the present State of Louisiana. His first priority was to establish a system of public education for the territory, since France and Spain, the previous owners, had authorized the Roman Catholic Church to be the sole sponsor of what little formal education there was in the Territory. Therefore, in 1805, Claiborne founded the College of Orleans and a system of parish (county) libraries. The preamble of this legislation expresses fully his philosophy of education at all levels:

Whereas the independence, happiness and grandeur of every republic, depend under the influence of Divine Providence, upon the wisdom, virtue, talents and energies of its citizens and rulers; And whereas learning has been found the ablest advocate of genuine liberty, the best supporter of rational religion, and the source of the only solid and imperishable glory which nations can acquire, Therefore be it enacted by the Governor of the Territory of Orleans, That an University [later to be designated as "College"] be, and is hereby, instituted within this Territory.

However, this attempt to establish a permanent college failed in 1824. In 1825 another attempt was made in Jackson, Louisiana, that would appeal to more students statewide, since Jackson was only a few miles from the Mississippi River. It was named the College of Louisiana.



The old Feliciana Courthouse was the first headquarters of the College of Louisiana in 1825.

COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA, 1825 - 1845

The late Dr. Walter Lowrey, Professor of History at Centenary from 1963-1980, provides a summary of the history of the College of Louisiana:

The Board [of Trustees] at Jackson on May 2, 1825, fell heir to the Feliciana Parish Courthouse, no longer needed for governmental purposes, rented buildings for student housing to supplement the courthouse space, and hired a president and a faculty. The College soon constructed several frame buildings to replace the unsuitable courthouse quarters, and later moved to a permanent campus nearby.

Wrangling among the faculty, disputes between Board and President, a dearth of students, misapplication of funds, and inconsistent state policies kept the College in turmoil during the twenty years it operated as a state institution. No more than 80 students ever enrolled at one time, and most of these were preparatory students. The rigorous academic requirements for entrance

The first president of the new college was the Reverend J.C. Chamberlin, a Presbyterian minister from Centre College in Kentucky. He was required to teach juniors and seniors in the college department, so he was considered a member of the faculty. Other faculty members in 1826 were Peter Dubaille, Greek and Latin; Diego Morphy, French and Spanish; and a Mr. Lane of Ouachita, Tutor and Principal of the Preparatory Department, which usually had a larger enrollment than the regular college.

In 1829 Thomas Russell Ingalls was added to the faculty as Professor of Chemistry and Natural History, and the Reverend James Ronaldson was named Chaplain.

In 1836 William Carpenter, M.D., was added to the faculty as Professor of Chemistry, Geology, and Natural History. Dr. Carpenter resigned to join the



faculty of Tulane University in 1843 and had a distinguished career as a medical doctor in New Orleans.

Dr. William Marbury Carpenter attended the College of Louisiana, was professor of natural history there from 1837 to 1843, and later professor of materia medica at the University of Louisiana.

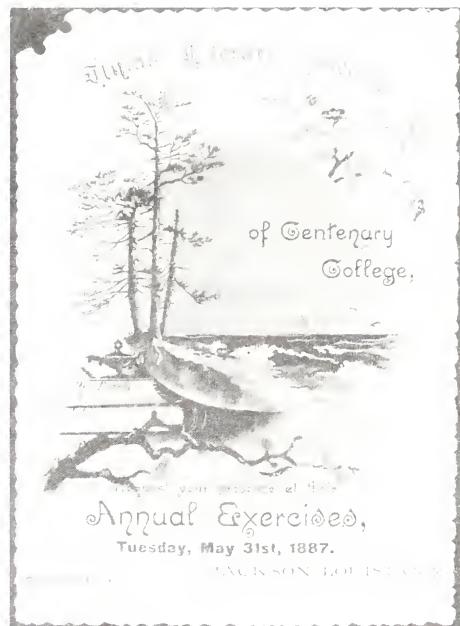
STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The first two major student organizations on the College of Louisiana campus appeared in the 1840s as two literary societies. The Union Literary Society was organized in 1842, and the Franklin Institute in 1843. Their main function was to provide experience in oratory and debate, social life and rivalry (between the two). Each had its own room and library in the great Center Building. At commencement time each had a special day with prominent speakers and special programs. The intense rivalry between the two in debate and oratory predated intra-mural athletic teams. Legend suggests that, during the Civil War when the Federal Forces captured Jackson, they left undamaged the room of the Union Literary Society because of the large "Union" sign above the door.

In 1859, Greek Letter Fraternities arrived on campus, but the Trustees of the College did not encourage them because of their rivalry with the established Literary Societies. When Centenary College of Louisiana moved to Shreveport, fraternities and sororities were organized in the 1920s and continue today.



The Franklin Institute debaters of 1882. Standing, C.C. Miller (later President of Centenary), and Charles McDonald. Seated, B.J. Janes and R.H. McGimsey.



The Union Literary Society debaters of 1882. Standing, S.J. Davies and M.A. Bell. Seated, James H. Fare and C.F. Smith.

METHODISM CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

In 1839 the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which included the State of Louisiana, joined other Methodist Conferences in America in celebrating the centennial of Methodism. The Reverend John Wesley, an Oxford University graduate and priest in the Church of England, had a spiritual awakening in 1738 while attending a meeting of laymen in one of the numerous Anglican Societies in London designed for Bible study and prayer. On that occasion he "felt his heart strangely warmed" and his preaching assumed a new dimension of spiritual enthusiasm, not altogether approved by the Anglican Bishops. In 1739 he joined the Reverend George Whitefield, another clergy friend from his Oxford days, and began to preach to the poor, uneducated and unchurched masses in outdoor settings throughout England and Ireland. The response was spectacular. Since the new converts were not prepared for membership in the Church of England, John Wesley organized them into Methodist Societies for Bible study and prayer. Wesley adopted the name "Methodist," which he learned while in Oxford University. He and a group of students had organized themselves into a well ordered group for Bible study, prayer, church attendance, and social services to the poor of the community. Other students dubbed them "Methodists" because of their methodical way of living and serving. His younger brother Charles was a leader in the group. He later joined John in his evangelistic campaigns and became the hymn writer for the Methodist movement.

JOHN WESLEY AS AN EDUCATOR

John Wesley was not only a successful evangelistic preacher, he was also an educator of the first order. As he selected laymen to preside over the Methodist Societies, it was necessary for him to provide them



John Wesley

with the rudiments of education and also to provide the Societies with simple libraries. He was responsible for 371 publications, including 50 volumes of a Christian library, and commentaries on the Bible for his lay preachers and their Societies. In 1739 he took over the Kingswood School founded by George Whitefield and developed a college with much of the curriculum selected or written by himself. On the occasion of its

opening ceremony, his brother Charles wrote a special hymn containing the famous lines that became Methodism's basic philosophy of education: "*Let us unite the two so long disjoined, knowledge and vital piety.*"

AMERICAN METHODISTS ORGANIZE A CHURCH

Many of the Methodists from England and Ireland settled in America in the latter part of the 18th Century and with their local preachers they developed Methodist Societies along the eastern seaboard. Wesley sent several of his best lay preachers to help them including Francis Asbury who became the general superintendent of American Methodism. After the Revolutionary War, the Methodist Societies grew rapidly, and in 1784 the Methodist preachers organized an American Methodist Episcopal Church. Because John Wesley never intended for the Methodist Societies to leave the Church of England, he objected to this move of the American Methodists. However, the American Methodists followed his guidelines in matters of theology, organization and the Sunday services.

Under the leadership of Francis Asbury, who was elected as Bishop, the Methodist Societies moved south and west, and continued to grow in membership. They organized new conferences and districts throughout the nation. In 1799 Tobias Gibson, a missionary circuit rider was sent to the Natchez area where he developed several circuits of Methodist



(Left to right) Reverend Benjamin M. Drake, Judge Edward McGehee, and William Winans were key figures in the founding of Centenary College in the Methodist Mississippi Conference and in its subsequent history.

Societies. In 1813 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church organized a Mississippi Conference with Louisiana as a district in that Conference.

In 1818 the Mississippi Conference founded a female academy. The buildings and grounds were donated by Miss Elizabeth Roach and the new institution was named Elizabeth Female Academy. This inspired a group of pastors to attempt to organize a full college for men. Led by B.M. Drake, William Winans and John Lane, this group persuaded the Conference to organize a Centenary College in 1839 as its way of celebrating the centennial of Methodism.

CENTENARY COLLEGE ORGANIZED IN 1839

Centenary College was founded in 1839 in Clinton, Mississippi where it occupied the buildings of a defunct Mississippi College. However, the state failed to transfer Mississippi College's charter to Centenary, so the Conference moved Centenary to Brandon Springs after purchasing the land and buildings of a failed "Watering Place." The first Board of Trustees for the new college was elected by the Conference in 1840,

and consisted of Chairman John Lane, B.M. Drake, Preston Cooper, H.H. Johnson, I.M. Taylor, Thomas Owen, W.H.N. Magruder, John Ford, C.K. Marshall, G.M. Rogers, James P. Thomas, and D.S. Goodloe.

The first faculty of Centenary College consisted of President T.C. Thornton, a clergyman; Professor of Mathematics J.B. Dodd; Professor of Ancient Languages H. Futwiller; Professor of Modern Languages W.H.N. Magruder; Professor of Natural Science James B. Thornton; Steward of the College Gabriel Felder; and Superintendent of the Preparatory Department Holden Dwight.

When the College opened in Brandon Springs, the Board of Trustees, in a burst of optimism for the future, organized a law school and a school of medicine with one faculty member each: D. O. Shattuck in law, and J.B.C. Thornton in medicine. Each was allowed to practice his profession in addition to his duties as faculty member. However, after four years of operation and only 12 graduates, Centenary College was ready to seek a more favorable location. The Mississippi Conference in 1845 then decided to purchase the property of the College of Louisiana at Jackson, which was for sale. Jackson was only a short distance from the southern border of

Mississippi, and at the time Louisiana was part of the Mississippi Conference. Judge E. L. McGehee, a prominent layman from Woodville, Mississippi, was dispatched to Jackson, where he negotiated the purchase of the College of Louisiana's land and buildings for \$10,000, with a down payment of \$166.66. No subsequent payment was ever made, and a few years later the state of Louisiana

canceled the debt. The two merged colleges then took the name of "Centenary College of Louisiana."

EARLY LEADERSHIP

In addition to Judge E. L. McGehee, two other Methodist names are prominent in Centenary's early history. Benjamin Drake, who for several years pressed the Conference to organize a full four-year college, is generally regarded as the founder of Centenary College. He served on the first Board of Trustees of the College and his descendants have been active leaders in the affairs of the college.

The Reverend William Winans was chairman of the Centenary College Board of Trustees for many years and for one year served as president *pro tem*. He was one of the Methodists' outstanding preachers for a long period in the 1800s.

CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA, 1845-1861

The merger of the two colleges proved to be propitious and after the election of the Reverend R.H. Rivers in 1849 as president, Centenary College of Louisiana entered a period of growth and prosperity. In addition to the president, there were five full-time faculty members, a principal of the Preparatory Department, and two tutors. The president's salary was \$2500, and the faculty's salaries averaged \$1500. William Winans was chairman of the Board of Trustees



Photograph of the lost cornerstone.

and Board of Visitors. By 1850, there were over 250 students and 15 graduates.

In 1852, a professor of music, who was to develop a band and choral groups in the college and the Jackson community, was added to the faculty.

FACULTY AS DISCIPLINARY BODY

The faculty met at least once a week and much of the time was spent in penalizing students for infractions of the college rules and regulations. The following such infraction was recorded in the minutes of 1854: "Mr. John Keller was reported for getting drunk and molesting citizens of Jackson and using indecent language."

These infractions by students from year to year included fighting, striking faculty members, stealing the college bell and placing it in a cistern, painting faculty horses, throwing hard biscuits in the dining room, and putting the President's buggy in the creek (one night with him in it). Many of these infractions, though, especially by the Academy students, were regarded as pranks and escapades of students away from home with little opportunity for recreation and social life.

A FULL WEEK OF GRADUATION EXERCISES

During the halcyon days of the 1850s prior to the Civil War, Centenary College of Louisiana brought excitement and thousands of visitors to the town of Jackson each year during commencement, which covered a full week. Crowds from both Louisiana and Mississippi usually included both governors. Speeches were delivered day and night by visiting dignitaries, interspersed by music from the college band and orchestra as well as a ladies chorus from Jackson. The two literary societies had special days for their various

presentations. In 1852, Charles Gayarre, the famous politician and historian, received an honorary Master's Degree, and his impromptu response lasted one hour. A record was set in 1854 by Professor J.C. Miller, whose baccalaureate address lasted six hours! All of these events each year gave wide publicity to Centenary College of Louisiana.

GREAT CENTER BUILDING, 1857

In 1857 the trustees erected the great Center Building with an auditorium seating two thousand and containing rooms for a full program of activities. The 1859 college catalogue gives this description of the building:

"It was an imposing building 60 by 90 feet costing \$60,000. In addition to the large chapel marked off by two rows of interior columns it has two large Literary Halls, a chapel for prayer, eight commodious Recitation Rooms, one Library Room, a Cabinet Room, separate rooms for chemical and philosophical apparatus, an office and other rooms for other purposes. In magnitude and architectural beauty it is a monument to Southern liberality and Southern taste."

The Civil War in 1861 brought a temporary halt to the prosperity and growth of Centenary College of Louisiana. On October 7, 1861, the faculty met. The last page of the minutes had this entry by secretary

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

1856 PRAYER. MUSIC.

MIND—ITS PRESENT AND ULTIMATE
JAMES C. STAFFORD, Wm. L. Moore, Miss

MENTAL DEVELOPMENT
J. W. BARROW, M. A., Jackson, La.

PoETRY—ITS MISSION,
J. S. BILLIE, LaFourche, La.

REPUBLICANISM—ITS FINAL TRIUMPH
K. A. CROSS, Jackson, La.

MUSIC.

YOUTH A BLUNDER, MISTAKE OR USELESSNESS
AGE & REGRET
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, Jackson, La.

THE MYSTERY OF THE FUTURE—A SOUL'S DREAM
PEACE
R. L. DUNN, Vicksburg, Miss.

FREEDOM OF DISCUSSION IN THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH
A. T. COOK, LaPlace, Miss.

THE NEW TESTAMENT—ITS MISSION & PROBLEMS
JAMES W. COOPER, Miss.

MUSIC.

THE CHURCH
AMES R. GIBSON, Vicksburg, Miss.
POETICAL READINGS—THE SONG OF SOLOMON
C. C. GRAY, Vicksburg, Miss.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

OPTIONAL PRAYER—ITS PROBLEMS W. H. KNIGHT, Vicksburg, La.

OBEDIENCE—THE HARMONY OF THE LAW
G. SPENCER MAYO, Vicksburg, La.

SATURDAY EVENING HISTORIAN
ROBERT F. PERKINS, Vicksburg, La.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH—ITS PROGRESS AND DUTIES
CHARLES M. PHILIPS, Vicksburg, La.

MUSIC
W. E. ELLIS, SLATER.

W. G. RICHARDSON, Vicksburg, La.
THE BAPTIST MISSION IN THE SOUTH
T. LEONARD BROWN, Vicksburg, La.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH
H. G. COOPER, Vicksburg, La.

MUSIC
YANKEE DODGER ADDRESSES
To the Public and Trusty Friends.

To the Faculty, Students and Class
W. L. MOORE, Vicksburg, La.

MUSIC
W. E. ELLIS, SLATER.

MUSIC
BENEDICTION
W. L. MOORE, Vicksburg, La.

This program for the Commencement exercises on July 30, 1856, is typical of the ceremonies at Jackson. The College band, orchestra and chorus interspersed occasional numbers to break the lengthy parade of addresses. The crowds wildly applauded these events.



A.R. Holcombe: "Students have all gone to war.
College suspended, and God help the right."

THE CIVIL WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

In 1861 the end of an era had come for Centenary College of Louisiana after 36 years of existence. The 209 graduates to that date included 70 lawyers, 27 medical doctors, 33 planters, 7 teachers, and 13 ministers.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, Louisiana faced a long period of reconstruction, economic ruin, and social and political turmoil. Federal troops were in complete control until 1877, when they were removed.

Centenary College of Louisiana re-opened in October 1865, under President J.H. Miller and three faculty members. There was a debt of \$23,360 for back salaries of the faculty and a past due debt on the main building. The Board of Trustees met again in March 1866, and elected the Reverend W.H. Watkins President of the College and the Reverend J.C. Keener as chairman of the Board of Trustees. The Reverend Mr. Keener then devoted the rest of his life to promoting Centenary College of Louisiana by traveling

Great Center Building built by Methodists, 1850

CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA.

This Institution, located at Jackson, La., was established by the State of Louisiana in 1825, and transferred to the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1845. It is now under the joint patronage of the Mississippi and Louisiana Conferences.

The College exercises were necessarily suspended during the war, but were regularly resumed after reorganization on the first Monday in October 1865. The approaching session will open on the first Monday of October next.

Tuition, \$75 per annum, payable semi-annually, in advance.

Boarding can be obtained at from \$20 to \$25 per month.

The Buildings, Libraries, Apparatus, Laboratory, and Society Halls, the location in point of beauty, health, ease of access and good society, are all unsurpassed by those of any institution in the Southern States.

The past history of the College is the pledge of its future prosperity.

The Board and Faculty promise the public that nothing shall be wanting on their part to secure the thorough education of the young men committed to their care, in both Preparatory and Collegiate Departments.

The old students, alumni and friends of the Institution, are requested to give publicity to the full reorganization and opening of the College, as stated above.

JACKSON, La., August 22d, 1866.

W. H. WATKINS,
President

G. H. WILEY,
Secretary of the Faculty

Centenary College was closed during the Civil War, and the campus was occupied by Northern troops during the latter days of the War. When the College re-opened its doors again, the above notice was sent to prospective students.

around the state in horse and buggy raising funds and soliciting students until his death in 1906. In 1870, the Methodist Church recognized his leadership and service by electing him Bishop. Although by that time the college was declining for lack of funds and students, it continued to do good work.



Bishop J.C. Keener from 1866 until his death in 1906 made Centenary College his prime concern.

COLLEGE MOVED TO SHREVEPORT IN 1906

During the last years of the 19th Century, the Methodist Conference began to consider moving the college to a more suitable location. In 1903 citizens of Shreveport made an offer of land and money to the Board of Trustees to move the college to Shreveport. Mr. J.B. Atkins, a prominent Methodist and head of the Rutherford-Atkins Realty Company donated 40 acres of land for a campus and arranged for a voluntary ten-year citizen tax to support the college. After several years of discussion and debate, the college was moved from Jackson, which was strongly opposed by Chairman Bishop Keener, most of the Board of Trustees, and the citizens of Jackson. In 1906, the Louisiana Conference created a new board of trustees. The Reverend W.E. Boggs, pastor of Shreveport's First Methodist Church, was named Agent for the college by the Louisiana Conference until it opened in Shreveport in 1906.

In 1907, a four-story brick building, later to be called Jackson Hall, was erected, costing \$30,000.

For several years the entire operation of the college and the academy was carried on in this one "Noah's Ark" building, including classes, dormitories, assembly hall, the kitchen and dining room, a library, and business offices.

The college opened in Shreveport in 1908, with an enrollment of 69 (most of these were in the Preparatory Department, or Academy), a faculty of four, including President William Lander Weber, and two instructors in the Academy.

The first catalogue in 1908 reflects an interesting perspective about the new college. There were two general courses or academic tracks, one Classical and the other Scientific. The course offerings included Bible, history, mathematics, chemistry, economics, physics, biology, astronomy, philosophy and psychology.

The catalogue also listed the following regulations for the students' moral life:

- No use of intoxicating liquors
- No cigarette smoking
- No tobacco in any form in any college building
- No gambling
- No hazing



Jackson Hall, the first building on the Shreveport campus, was completed in 1907, an imposing four story structure that still stands today after several renovations.



Moving the dining hall and kitchen to a wooden building made available much needed space for classes and dormitory rooms in the rapidly deteriorating Jackson Hall. The dining hall was attached to Jackson Hall in 1922.

THE EARLY YEARS IN SHREVEPORT

Despite great hopes for a new beginning, the first thirteen years in Shreveport found Centenary College of Louisiana again struggling for its existence. The first faculty consisted of W.L. Weber, President; W.B. Beckwith, Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy; James Hinton, Professor of Latin and Greek; Milo Jones, Professor of Natural Science and Modern Languages, two instructors in the Academy as well as a recruiter for students. In 1910, Dr. Weber became ill and was replaced by the Reverend Felix Hill. After a brief term, President Hill was followed by the Reverend R.H. Wynn, who brought some progress to the college. President Wynn resigned in 1918, leaving the college in a slightly improved condition though the College and Academy enrollment had risen to only 80.



The first Chapel and Gymnasium.

A STRONG BOARD OF TRUSTEES

During these early years of struggle in Shreveport the college had a strong Board of Trustees. P.M. Welsh was the first chairman in the Shreveport location. The board continued to raise funds for the struggling college and made several overtures to the Methodist Louisiana Conference to launch a campaign to finance new buildings and increase the endowment. However, in 1917 the trustees launched a Shreveport campaign which brought \$55,000 for the endowment.



Centenary's first stadium was located near Centenary Boulevard. The watery area was a baseball diamond. The new chapel, almost completed, is at left and a corner of Jackson Hall is visible at the far right.



Colonial Hall, built in the 1920s expansion program, was first known as the College Building. It became a women's dormitory, and was located on the site where Jones Residence Hall now stands.



H. W. Bourne

PRESIDENT BOURNE 1918

In 1918 a new president, H.W. Bourne, was elected and immediately began the process of moving Centenary to an "A grade" college, and a building program was begun with the help of the trustees and a bank loan of \$100,000. The

first new building was a wooden, two-story structure with columns across the front. The next new building was a combination gymnasium and chapel. Since an "A grade" college required the separation of the college from the academy, two frame buildings were erected near the southeast corner of the campus to house the Academy.

The promising presidency of H.W. Bourne was short-lived when the Methodist General Board of Education called on him in November 1920 to lead a fund-raising campaign for its schools and colleges.

Perhaps the most lasting legacy brought by President Bourne was the creation of the Department of Religion with Dr. R.E. Smith as the first chairman.

GEORGE SEXTON, CENTENARY'S PRESIDENT IN THE TWENTIES

After the resignation of President Bourne, the trustees turned to Dr. George S. Sexton, pastor the First Methodist Church in Shreveport, to save the College. Dr. Sexton was a successful fundraiser, had built several church buildings, and had recently



Dr. George S. Sexton

worked with the Methodist General Conference to build a "representative" Methodist Church in Washington, D.C. In order to persuade him to take the presidency, a group of trustees met in January of 1921 and personally pledged \$315,000 to the struggling college. This group was composed of E.A. Frost, F.T. Whited, George

Prestridge, J.C. Foster, T.C. Clanton, John L. Scales, R.T. Moore, A.J. Peavy, J.B. Atkins, and W.K. Henderson.

The last named was not a member of the Board of Trustees but was a wealthy citizen of Shreveport interested in the college. Their

action persuaded Dr. Sexton to accept the position in 1921. At this time, the enrollment of the college and the academy was only 43. With the help of the Board of Trustees and prominent Shreveport citizens, his first move was to organize a football team under the coaching of the highly successful Alvin "Bo" McMillin of Centre College, Danville Kentucky. Shreveport businessmen provided a salary of \$8,000 to attract the new coach. The President's salary was only \$6,000 plus housing at the time. The famous football team produced by McMillin gave Centenary nation-wide publicity and brought students from all across the country. In 1925, student enrollment had risen to 637.

During the Sexton years, a building boom included several wooden structures, a two-story brick administration building, and with the help of the Shreveport Rotary Club, another brick dormitory for men. The building program was financed by several fund-raising campaigns, a bond issue of \$300,000, help from the Louisiana Methodist Conference, and numerous bank loans.

Under President Sexton, the faculty was enlarged,



Alvin "Bo" McMillin brought nation-wide publicity and students from all across the country to Centenary with the College's football team.

emphasis was placed on the music department, the two literary societies were re-established, and fraternities organized. The entire range of student activities was also greatly enlarged. A Centenary renaissance was at hand.

The year 1925 marked the 100th anniversary of Centenary, an event celebrated with special programs and a financial campaign — the first in the 20th Century.

Basketball team and coach Homer Norton in the early 1920s.



Centenary College summer school participants near Mena, Ark.

A SUMMER SCHOOL AND FOOTBALL CAMP IN THE OZARKS

In 1922, Dr. Sexton was the recipient of a tract of land on Rich Mountain near Mena, Arkansas, and forthwith organized a summer school at that location. Since the famous coach Bo McMillin was gathering a football team for the College, he and the new team had a football camp in connection with the Centenary summer school. The above picture shows the summer school and football team at Camp Standing Rock near Mena. President Sexton is seated on the right front row, Dean R.E. Smith is seated on the left front row, and Coach Bo McMillin is standing just behind Dean Smith.

In 1940, Ernest Rolston, head of the School of Music, prepared to open a summer school of music for Centenary College at this location in the Ozarks, but World War II ended his plans.



New Administration Building — 1924, now the Meadows Museum



President Cline, Bishop Dobbs and George Sexton

DEPRESSION YEARS, 1929 – 1939

The great economic depression of 1929 - 1939 brought another crisis to Centenary College as income dwindled and students found it difficult to attend college. Some paid their tuition with bales of cotton and garden commodities accepted by Centenary. The faithful faculty suffered again with salary cuts and payments with script money planned by the economic department.

After the death of President Sexton the trustees turned to Dr. Angie Smith, pastor of Shreveport's First Methodist Church, who served as acting president for one year. During his brief tenure, he secured the election of a faculty member, Dr. Pierce Cline, as the new college president, and persuaded Paul Brown, Jr., to lead a trustee committee to save the college from bankruptcy. Paul Brown, Jr., was the son of a famous

Methodist minister whose family had been supporters of Centenary College for many years. Paul, Jr., was at the time a successful businessman of Shreveport, and a graduate and former teacher at Centenary.

For several years he worked closely with the president, faculty and trustee chairman to restructure the college and make it a viable educational institution. Later he was elected chairman of the College Board of Trustees and devoted the rest of his life to the interests of his alma mater.



Paul M. Brown, Jr.



Haynes Gymnasium

THE PRESIDENCY OF DR. PIERCE CLINE

Dr. Pierce Cline assumed the presidency of Centenary College in 1933, and made enhanced academics and an increased endowment among his top priorities. Also in 1933, Bishop Hoyt M. Dobbs was elected chairman of the Board of Trustees, the second Methodist Bishop to hold this position. With these three leaders, the college not only survived the depression, but it moved on to greater achievements soon thereafter.

Despite the Depression years, the Haynes Gymnasium was added to the campus in 1936-37, the gift of Mr. Arch Haynes, a strong believer in Centenary's athletic program. The cost of the building, the largest on campus to that date, was \$180,000.

CENTENARY AND WORLD WAR II

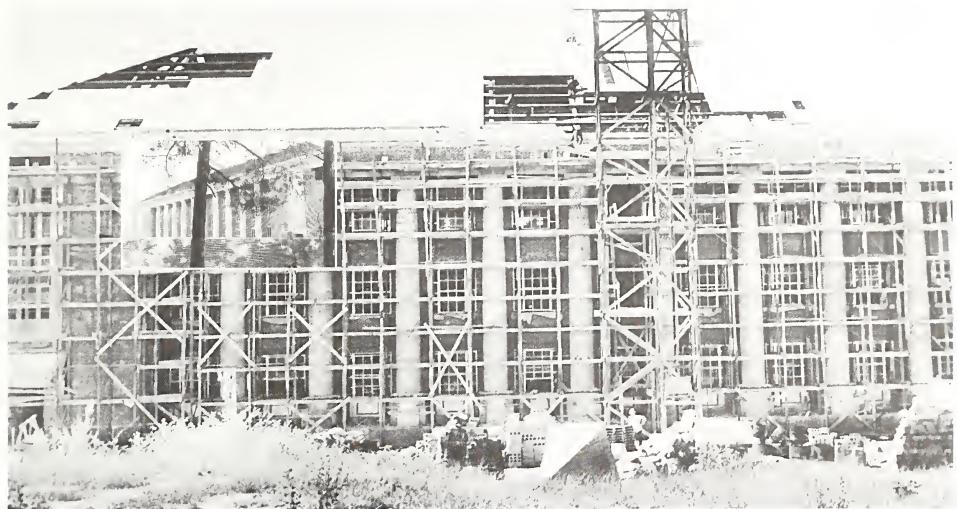
World War II brought two significant changes to Centenary College of Louisiana. First, there was an influx of students from the air base, Barksdale Field, and at one time the student body totaled 1400. This increased student body called for more changes, and the college acquired the campus of the recently closed Dodd College. The government provided housing for veterans at Centenary, Vets Villa, south of Kings Highway, and also provided several warehouses on the campus as well as other surplus materials. Later, Centenary acquired loans from the government at low interest rates for its post-war building program.



Barksdale Cadets



Dr. R.E. Smith, Bible professor



Mickle Hall under construction

POST WAR BUILDING ERA, 1945-1964

In 1945, Dr. Joe J. Mickle, a Methodist lay missionary, was elected president of Centenary College and served until 1964, the longest term of any president to that date. He and Paul M. Brown, Jr., chairman of the Board of Trustees, transformed the campus into a modern facility with new buildings and beautiful landscapes. In the process, they turned the campus around, facing it eastward toward the newly opened Woodlawn Street. During the Mickle and Paul Brown, Jr., era, 13 new buildings were added, costing approximately \$5 million. Among them were Magale Library, Brown Chapel, Hurley School of Music, R.E. Smith Religious Center Building, Cline Hall for Men, and Mickle Hall of Science. Two financial campaigns to fund the building program and to increase the endowment were completed during this building era.

This was not only a building era but also was a time when the academic program was improved with a larger faculty and improved salaries. Dr. and Mrs. Mickle were especially active in civic affairs as well as in the life of the College.



Dr. and Mrs. Joe J. Mickle brought wide publicity to a developing Centenary College.



Above: Four interior columns of the main building on the Centenary Jackson campus were brought to the Shreveport campus in the 1940s and placed on display. Students gave them names based on the major points of a chapel address by President Pierce Cline: Integrity, Sobriety, and Dependability. The fourth column was named Oscar. They were blown down later by a severe wind storm; some person or persons carried them away; and, like the 1825 cornerstone, they were never recovered. A short piece of one of the columns may be seen in the Peters Archives Building. These classic columns, surrounding the interior of the auditorium of the center building in Jackson, give some indication of the grandeur of this great building completed in 1857.

Right: A full trunk of records from the Jackson campus was brought to Shreveport in 1940.

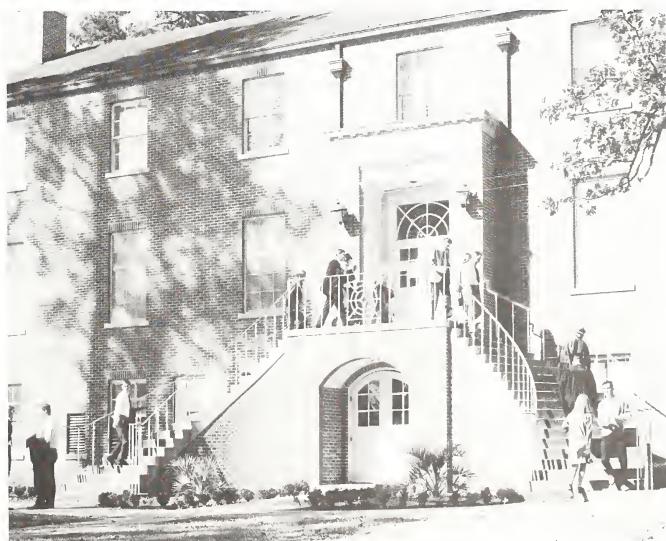




Above: A close-up view of the Hurley School of Music Building, which is scheduled to be part of a future arts complex located on the northeast corner of the campus.

Below: 1960s view of Moore Student Union Building.

Above: Brown Memorial Chapel was erected in 1955 by Paul M. Brown, Jr. and his brother Perry Brown, in honor of their parents, Reverend and Mrs. Paul M. Brown. A brochure prepared for the dedication of the chapel contains these words: "This Chapel, with its towering walls, spacious aisles and beautiful woodwork, is more than a place of beauty: It is the House of God. The steeple, raising the cross above all else on the campus, over a hundred feet from the ground, should be a constant reminder to the faculty, students and campus visitors that the foundation upon which this College stands is a spiritual foundation and that the spirit of the Great Teacher himself should ever permeate this campus."





An aerial view of the Centenary Campus in the 1960s showing, from left to right, Brown Memorial Chapel, Mickle Hall of Science, Mogole Library, Hurley School of Music, and Marjorie Lyons Playhouse. The beautiful wooded area is shown in the rear.



The Atkins Memorial entrance from Centenary Boulevard.



Famous book walk for new Library

THE 'SIXTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

During the presidency of Dr. Jack Wilkes, 1964-69, a Methodist minister and former president of Oklahoma City University, Centenary College adopted a policy of admitting all students on a non-discriminatory basis at a time when the public institutions of Louisiana were still racially segregated. This action exemplified courage, integrity, and leadership by the faculty, administration, and trustees of the College.

In 1965 Paul Brown, Jr., resigned as chairman of the Board of Trustees having served a term of 25 critical years, and George D. Nelson, a prominent Shreveport businessman, was elected to follow him.

President Wilkes resigned in 1969, and a new president, Dr. John Horton Allen, arrived in 1970. One year later two major buildings were added—a new administration building, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. D.P. Hamilton, and a major athletic complex south of Kings Highway, the Gold Dome. These two new buildings cost approximately \$2,000,000.

SENUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

In 1975, the college sesquicentennial celebration began with Shreveport newspapers featuring a long history of the college. Dr. Walter Lowrey of the



History Department prepared a special pictorial brochure of the historical highlights of Centenary. Charter Day was observed February 14, and for the next several weeks special speakers were featured, including Governor Edwin Edwards and several Methodist bishops. The commencement program in June included diplomas in Latin. As usual in most Centenary celebrations, a fund-raising campaign was launched to increase the endowment. One year later, \$2,400,000 had been contributed. Two new endowed chairs were announced, and master's degrees in education and

business administration were announced. The Frost School of Business was funded by Trustee Edwin Whited and the Frost Foundation.

ACHIEVING FINANCIAL STABILITY, 1977-1991

Dr. Donald Webb, a Methodist minister from England, who received his theological education in Methodist seminaries in America, was

Centenary's president from 1977 to 1991. His

first project was to balance the ailing budget, and he enlisted the help of the Louisiana Methodist Conference, which raised \$450,000 for the 1978 budget of \$3,147,337. It was thus balanced for the first time in many years. The new president had the support of the Board of Trustees for a three-point "Operation Triad," which included the following goals: an endowment of \$20 million, a student body of 1,100, and a permanently balanced budget.

In 1986 under Webb's leadership and with the motto "Upstream," the Board of Trustees developed a "Five-Year Strategic Plan" to be financed by another



Dr. Donald Webb

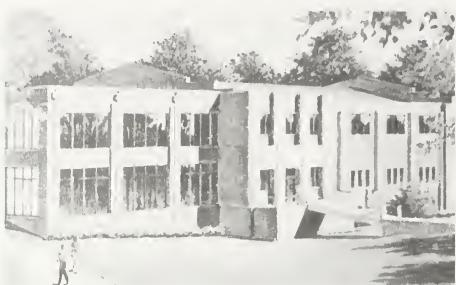
fund-raising campaign called "Fulfill the Vision," looking toward the year 2000. The general goal was \$13,000,000, and the campaign divided as follows: The Trustees, Faculty-Staff, Foundations, The Methodist Conference and Local Churches, Shreveport-Bossier City, and a general Alumni Campaign. Excitement was high when the Trustees exceeded their goal with a total of \$8,810,965 with Sam Peters as the leader. The other phases of the campaign were equally successful, and the Board of Trustees meeting March 14, 1991, reported that the *Fulfill the Vision Campaign* raised a total of \$16,155,000. Two new buildings were constructed, the Sam Peters Building housing the College and the Louisiana Methodist Archives, and a Music Library attached to the Hurley School of Music.

Reflecting Centenary's national acceptance and recognition, eighteen new scholarships were endowed in 1986-87.

1991 TO PRESENT

In May 1991, Dr. Kenneth L. Schwab was elected the 34th president of Centenary College of Louisiana. During his first year he thoroughly studied the College and visited the districts of the Methodist Louisiana Conference and several cities beyond Louisiana where there were concentrations of Centenary alumni.

He also worked closely with the Board of Trustees, the faculty, and other administrative officers and



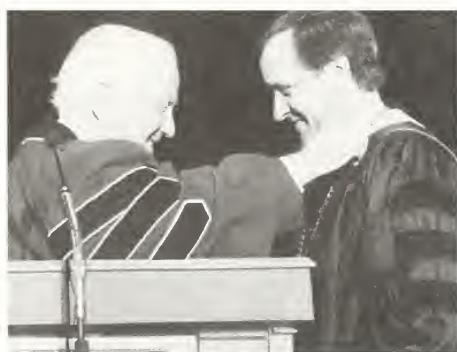
Rendering of Centenary's wellness center and natatorium featuring Centenary's first swimming pool.

established an Institutional Planning Committee, which outlined goals and plans looking forward to the year 2000, when the college would celebrate its 175th anniversary. This committee was composed of trustees, students, faculty, and administrators, thus involving the entire campus community. The planning document also considered goals and plans prepared by the previous administration. There were nine general goals:

1. a strong faculty
2. a student body including students from foreign nations
3. a plan to involve students with three major experiences beyond the classroom: other cultures, service projects in the community, and extensive career counseling
4. a program of leadership development for students
5. a wellness center on the campus
6. more faculty and student research
7. renovation of facilities
8. more scholarships
9. a larger endowment

These general goals have been periodically refined and have now been implemented.

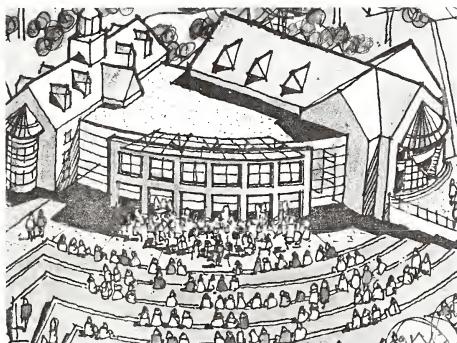
President Schwab's first annual report ended with these words: "We have talented students and a great faculty. We have dedicated trustees. We have the Methodist Church and thousands of friends who want us to succeed. Our goals for the year 2000 are lofty and will require immense effort. But they are attainable. We must never forget our motto: *"Labor Omnia Vincit."*"



Chairman George D. Nelson and new President Kenneth L. Schwab.

NEW CAMPUS PLANS, BUILDING RENOVATION ADOPTED, 1993

By mid-year of 1993, the firm of Dober, Lindsley and Company of Boston was selected to draw up a master plan for campus and building renovation as part of a general strategic plan leading up to the year 2000. The Board of Trustees meeting on December 9, 1993, adopted the campus master plan in principle. The basic components of the plan included: enlarging the campus by moving eastward, taking in Woodlawn Street and lots beyond; repaving all parking lots and establishing new ones; creating an arts complex in the northeast corner of the campus in the area of the Hurley School of Music and the Marjorie Lyons Playhouse; and rebuilding the Moore Student Center and the Rotary Residence Hall. Mickle Hall of Science



Rendering of the proposed renovations for the Moore Student Center.

was to be renovated and enlarged. The centerpiece of the plan was a wellness center and natatorium encompassing the Haynes Gymnasium and surrounding area. Several departments would be moved to other buildings, and the College and Methodist Archives would be moved to the Magale Library.

1996: A YEAR OF PROGRESS

In 1996 Rotary Hall was rebuilt as a coed residence hall with three floors of apartment-style suites and an attic containing studio apartments. The ground floor contained an entrance lobby, apartments, and general



Renovated Rotary Hall is now Rotary Suites with apartment-style suites.

purpose rooms, and the eastern front of the building was attractively landscaped. The total project cost \$2.4 million using funds from a new bond issue of \$7 million to complete the campus plan.

In 1996 a Peavy Memorial Climbing Tower was erected north of Haynes Gymnasium, the entire campus was finally computerized, new campus gardens and memorial trees were planted, and campus security was upgraded with additional personnel.

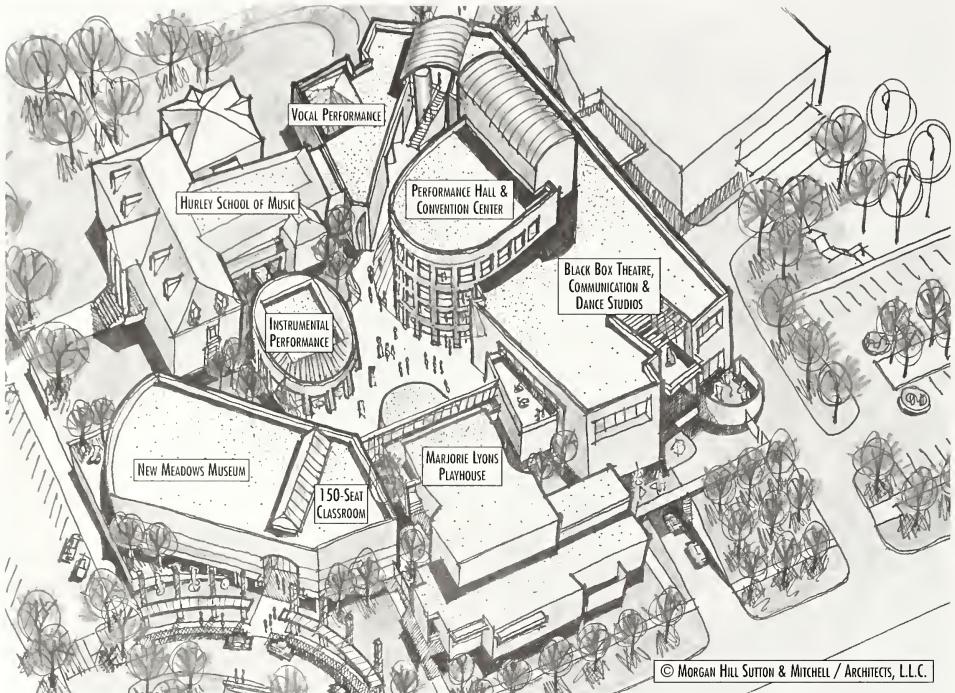


Peavy Climbing Tower



1998-99

In a special report covering the years 1998-99, Centenary College was again ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* as the best college value in the South. Also *Barron's Best Buys in College*



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Architectural rendering for the proposed arts complex on the northeast corner of the campus.

Education listed Centenary among 300 colleges in the U.S. giving students and parents the best value for their "education dollar" as a result of an outstanding faculty and personal attention to students.

In 1998, the college's Department of Education moved to a recently purchased building on the corner of Kings Highway and Woodlawn as part of the campus expansion program.

Among faculty members cited for special honors were recipients of the Outstanding Teacher award, who included the following during the 1990s: Dr. Sam Shepherd, Dr. Austin Sartin, Dr. Dana Kress, Dr. Elizabeth Rankin, Dr. Gale Odom, Dr. Rodney Grunes, Mr. Ron Dean, and Dr. George Newtown. Also, Dr. Austin Sartin (1992) of the Geology Department and Dr. Dana Kress (1999) of the French Department were selected as the Louisiana Professors

of the Year.

In 1999, among the new faculty appointments were the Reverend Jack O'Dell, director of the Church Careers program and college chaplain, and Dr. Earl Fleck, provost and dean of the college.



Local news reporter interviews Kevin Johnson when he was named men's head basketball coach in 1999.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE: THE CAMPAIGN FOR CENTENARY

The last major thrust in 1999 – preparing for the year 2000 and Centenary's 175th anniversary – was outlined in a publication entitled *A Vision for the Future: The Campaign for Centenary*, which would extend to the year 2003. Two prominent trustees were co-chairmen of the campaign, William G. Anderson and Edward J. Crawford III. The honorary chairman was former U.S. Senator J. Bennett Johnston. President Schwab and Bishop Dan Solomon were ex officio members. Other members included the following trustees: Dr. Charles Beard, William T. Bradford, Charles Ellis Brown, Dr. Kenneth Carlile, Dr. Nancy M. Carruth, J. Stafford Comegys, Robert T. Goodwin, Edwin C. Harbuck, Roy S. Hurley, Massasuke Kawasaki, Dr. P. Michael Mann, Taylor E. Moore, Dr. George D. Nelson, Samuel P. Peters, Jr., Dr. Leonard M. Riggs, Jr., Ronald Sawyer, Virginia Kilpatrick Shehee, and Fletcher Thorne-Thomsen. The financial needs for buildings and campus development totaled \$149,320,000. The publication listed the major projects to be funded, in part, by the campaign:

- Mickle Hall renovation, \$15 million
- Moore Student Center, \$8.7 million
- arts complex, \$17 million
- Marjorie Lyons Playhouse renovation, \$4 million
- Hurley Music building, \$7.9 million
- Meadows Museum relocation, \$7.5 million
- fitness center and natatorium, \$9.5 million
- virtual information campus, \$2.8 million
- additional endowment, \$27.3 million

A report from the President in November 1999 identified the next phase of the campus building program, and included a long list of donors to the *Campaign for Centenary*, which included a family gift of \$7.2 million. This phase of the *Campaign for Centenary*, which began in 1995, had a goal of \$70 million in cash and \$20 million in planned gifts. The 1999 report noted that \$62 million had been raised toward the \$70 million cash goal.

175TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

As Centenary entered the year 2000 A.D., a series of events was scheduled to celebrate its 175 years of history. One major event was the visit of former First Lady Mrs. Barbara Bush as commencement speaker on May 6. The alumni association and alumni office planned a convocation in March with speakers presenting vignettes of Centenary's history, and a series of class reunions and special dinners. The college issued a set of "175 Years" brass key rings for faculty, trustees, alumni, students, and friends of the College.

In February 2000, President Schwab issued his annual report and reiterated several ongoing "visions," including specific plans for celebrating Centenary's 175th year. A major campus event the year before was the groundbreaking for the new fitness center and natatorium. The budget for 1998-99 reflected a healthy financial situation: total income, \$24,274,344 and expenditures, \$23,151,688. For the first time in its history, Centenary's total endowment exceeded \$100,000,000.

Also significant in the President's report, "Since its founding in 1825, Centenary College of Louisiana has been committed to academic rigor, high standards of personal conduct, and integrated development of the mind, body and spirit of its students. Consistent with its affiliation with the United Methodist Church and in recognition of the importance of supporting the



Members of the faculty and staff celebrate the centuries of Centenary during the 175th anniversary year.

development of spiritual values in its students, the College continues to encourage a life-long dedication, not only to learning, but also to serving others.

As it enters the 21st Century, Centenary will continue to enhance its reputation as one of the premier student-centered liberal arts colleges in the nation—one that leaves a positive and permanent mark on the life of every graduate and focuses on the development of individuals who will become responsible citizens, skilled professionals and capable leaders.”

As Centenary College of Louisiana enters the new millennium in 2001, a brief description of this nationally recognized college of liberal arts is appropriate:

Centenary is a private liberal arts college affiliated with the United Methodist Church and domiciled in Shreveport, Louisiana. The student body includes 852 undergraduates and 139 graduate students. The student-faculty ratio is 12:1 and there are 18 endowed chairs. The operating budget is \$24 million and the endowment is over \$100 million.

We close with a quote from the chorus of the College Alma Mater:

Forward, forward Centenary.

Time and Tide may fail;

But our hearts will love thee ever,

Centenary Hail!



The Centenary College Choir, directed by Dr. Will Andress, performed a rousing college fight song spelling out G-E-N-T-S at the 175th Anniversary Founders' Day Convocation.

The Centenary Choir, organized by A.C. (Cheesy) Voron in the 1940s and now directed by Will Andress, has been the “singing Ambassadors for Centenary College and the City of Shreveport” for many years. The choir has sung in most countries of the world bringing a witness of great music, the best in higher education and the best example of American youth. They have accepted three invitations to the White House as guests of the President of the United States.



Members of the faculty and staff celebrate the centuries of Centenary during the 175th anniversary year.



Centenary's 1999-2000 Board of Trustees



President Schwab and Trustee Historian Dr. Bentley Sloane

CENTENARY'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES VITAL TO COLLEGE'S SUCCESS

For 175 years the Centenary Board of Trustees has played an important role in the life of the college, especially in times of crisis. It has helped to bring Centenary to its present high level of achievement in the year 2000 as one of the outstanding liberal arts colleges in America. The present chairman is William G. Anderson.

Several trustees who served long and successful terms:

1846	William Winans, 21 years
1866	Bishop J.C. Keener, 40 years
1911	Dr. John L. Scales, 14 years
1941	Paul M. Brown, Jr., 25 years
1966	George D. Nelson, Sr., 30 years



CENTENARY COLLEGE OF LOUISIANA

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